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## THE CHILDREN'S POET.

MOST of us have wondered, when we read,

Come to me, O ye children !  
For I hear you at your play,

who were the children, and whether they came, and what were the real relations of the poet Longfellow with child-world, when he was able to put into words so perfectly the feeling of other hearts. (His brother, the Rev. Samuel Longfellow, in the *Life* lately published, gives portions of a journal and letters, from which we may glean glimpses of the household laureate in a new and winning character.) In his spacious old mansion, Craigie House, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, there were two sons and four daughters born to him. 'Little Fanny,' who died as an infant, was the 'one dead lamb' of the flock. When the first baby-boy came, the poem *To a Child* was composed, partly while walking in his luxuriant garden. He was Professor of Modern Languages in the American Cambridge, and poet and student as well; and a nervous affection of the eyes made rest and air necessary. Sometimes his wife read for him under the linden tree, while he stretched upon the hay, and 'C., red as a clover blossom, ran to and fro and into all possible mischief.' At other times, he spent whole afternoons and mornings playing in the garden with the 'monarch absolute,' wheeling him in the hand-barrow, or telling him stories which would not do out of any book, but should be improvised on the spot.

But was Master C. the monarch absolute? He cries 'Yide! yide!' for half an hour before the horses are out, for a drive to town; but in the carriage with him there is another boy, smaller, nodding to sleep, ('with his cape, and straw hat shaped like the helmet of Mambrino.') The diary was brief; but there was space for minute descriptions of these two, despite Dante and the college, despite poetry and the world. They drove over the snow—'C. with the reddest of cheeks and leggings, and E. with his new white plush cocked-up hat.' E. went for his

first walk in the street, and the cocked-up hat with plumes was out again, and how splendid he looked!—white, red, and blue, with blue coat and red gaiters. But as yet, the elder was the more companionable. It was he that burst jubilant out of the study in the lamplight, when his father came in from the winter afternoon walks and the inevitable pause on the bridge—that famous bridge with the long black rafters. It was he that paid a visit to the college library, and was regaled with Audubon's big *Book of Birds*. It was he, again, that was taken to the circus, and refused to be amused by clowns or horses, but, instead, was vastly amused with a black kitten sitting on a post when they came out; whence his father drew the moral, that children enjoy slight things best, because they understand them.

When the author of *Evangeline* went into town to arrange for its publication, his account of the day included the purchase of a railway-train of painted tin. Another day he buys hoops, and he always writes down the 'infinite delight' or the 'great delight' his presents gave. But when the boys grew bigger, and, in a misguided moment, he purchased two velocipedes on a Saturday, he hears prodigious noise all Sunday in the hall, and shrewdly notes in his journal that Saturday is the wrong day for buying playthings.

If a child of his was ill, he himself was sick at heart and could do nothing. It was a day of agony when his infant daughter was dying and when the physicians despaired; but he would not give up hope. Then he heard the clocks ticking loud in the desolate rooms, all labouring on to the fatal hour; and his own child's death is described in the *Golden Legend*:

She left off breathing, and no more.  
I smoothed the pillow beneath her head.  
She was more beautiful than before.  
Like violets faded were her eyes;  
By this we knew that she was dead.

In the darkened library he sat beside her, watching the white face and the white flowers in her little hands; in the deep silence, the bird

sang from the hall—a sad strain, (a melancholy requiem,) that touched his grief somehow with comfort. Afterwards, in the night, the youngest boy, three years old, half waking from a dream, said out loud: 'Little sister has got well!' The loss was a bleeding wound, a sleepless pain, long after he had gone back with a heavy heart to his college work. 'An inappeasable longing to see her comes over me at times, which I can hardly control,' he wrote; and this was the prose of the poem called *Resignation* and of its lines towards the end:

And though at times impetuous with emotion  
And anguish long suppressed.

His boys are seen in glimpses still, through the journal. One day he 'worked hard' at their snow-house; another day he cast lead flat-irons for them, while one talked volubly, and the other showed his glee by joyous eyes and silent tongue. His lectures the day before had been upon Schiller's *Song of the Bell*, and their interest in the casting of a mighty bell could not have been greater. 'Why not write for them a *Song of the Lead Flat-iron*?' One August day he took them—very small boys still—to the old house under the Washington elm, 'and left them sitting in their little chairs among the other children. God bless the little fellows!' Afterwards, his favourite after-breakfast walk was the walk to school. Three little girls came to his house and his heart as time went on, and completed the circle.

Their home was the old house with its grassy terraces and lilac hedges. There was a white wainscoted hall, with the drawing-room at one side, and the study at the other, with its ever open door; the nursery was over it and the patter of little feet. Between the front garden and the river Charles lay his own meadow, with 'a whole California of buttercups;' and in mowing-time, haycocks, beyond which one saw the brown sails of boats. In the rear, the garden was beautiful in early summer with apple and cherry bloom, 'and the fiery blossom of the peach,' the fragrance scenting the piazza along by the windows, and blowing into the upper rooms, where the huge old fireplaces glistened with quaint Dutch tiles.

Every summer, the family went to Nahant, a favourite seaside resort, with ocean breeze and burning sun; his brother-in-law invented for it the name of 'Cold Roast Boston.' If he longed to renew his Rhineland travels, the idea dissolved like a mirage. 'The trouble there is in getting my babies to Nahant in summer, with all the go-carts and nurses, warns me of the perils of any long journey, and admonishes me to "let well alone."' At Nahant, there were promontories covered with wild-roses, a wide strand where the sea-gulls skimmed and the red kine wandered home while the bells sounded from Lynn; and there were also nurses of surpassing ugliness to dip the children. Who does not remember childhood's horror of the blue bathing-woman, on reading his note: 'They wallow about like unhandsome mermaids or women of the walrus family.'

Home again; and winter brought Christmas, kept in the good old style. Mr Ferguson, in *America during and after the War*, has given a

guest's description of Christmas at Craigie House: 'The yule-log sparkled on the hearth; the plum-pudding smoked upon the board; with his prettiest offerings did the good saint fill the stockings of the little girls by night; and all day long did the presents come pouring in to the children of a much-loved household, till the drawing-room table on the following morning looked like the stall of a fancy fair. Even the passing guest came in for some tokens, not needed to remind him of that day. And he left the house wherein the presence of the master is a perpetual sunshine—where never a peremptory word is spoken, and yet there is a perfect loving obedience—with the feeling that it was good for a man to have been there.'

The master and father's birthday was a home-feast too. Years before this Christmas description, when he told one of his children that he was forty-five, he was asked in return, was not that nearly a century old? On their birthdays, his little ones had parties—a multitude of children racing along the piazza, romping in the hay, besieging a fort in the old apple-tree, scrambling for sugar-plums, and winding up with supper and a simple merry dance in the drawing-room. He often went to small-folks' parties, and observed how lovely and graceful were the little girls, and how awkward a thing is a boy at the green-gosling age. 'Children are pleasant to see playing together,' he wrote in his diary; 'it is still pleasanter to have one alone; then you are a confidant or father-confessor.' This sympathy inspired poems that have given a voice to the inner secrets, the airy thoughts, and the mysterious joy, of love for young life in ten thousand homes.

One day when he was in a melancholy mood, he heard the children rejoicing in the room over his study; and he wrote the poem, *Come to me, O ye Children*, for with the sound of their gladness his sad thoughts had vanished. They were to him the light of morning and the warmth of the sun, the music of summer, the singing of birds.

Ah! what would the world be to us,  
If the children were no more?  
We should dread the desert behind us  
Worse than the dark before.

For what are all our contrivings,  
And the wisdom of our books,  
When compared with your caresses  
And the gladness of your looks?

These last four lines sum up a universal feeling; and the whole poem upon that theme of the widest sympathy, was perhaps the most true and sympathetic ever written. To the sanctuary of home, Longfellow entered for ever; he had sung to the pulse of the whole world's heart.

And how did the children come? Elsewhere, he tells us in *The Children's Hour*. They came between the daylight and the dark, rushed in by three open doors at once from the lamp-lit stairway and the hall, climbed his armchair, and devoured him with kisses, till he thought of the legendary Bishop of Bingen in his Rhine tower overrun with mice:

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,  
Because you have scaled the wall,  
Such an old moustache as I am  
Is not a match for you all!

And as they have entered his fortress, he puts them down into the dungeon of his heart, to keep them there for ever and a day, till the walls shall moulder to dust. The blue-eyed banditti are described in prose in a letter sent with a kiss to a little girl: the eldest, liking poetry; the second, golden-haired, 'a very busy little woman, and wears gray boots'; the youngest, 'Allegra, which you know means merry, and she is the merriest little thing you ever saw—always singing and laughing all over the house.' The boys are left out of this playful letter, because 'they are such noisy fellows; it is of no use to talk about them.' (In vacation, he took the noisy pair to the play. 'The play, wretched stuff,' says the journal. 'A young woman in yellow satin, representing the fashionable life of New York, holds a red-covered book, which she says is her "dear Henry W. Longfellow's poems," and she asks her milliner which she prefers, Longfellow or Tennyson.' Happy boys with Paterfamilias—how they must have laughed!)

Year after year there was a Maypole in the garden on the first of May, and a sedate little party of flower-crowned children feasted in the summer-house. But the Twelfth Night record is still better when over the snow came 'a sleighful of schoolgirls'—O shade of Dickens, O pencil of Greuze!—and then the young men from the college were knocking at the door, and there were rings in the cake, and a King and Queen of Twelfth Night. And we hear of another party with the little ones disguised as the Old Year with big boots and beard, and the New Year with a wreath; and after the fun, he notes the mysterious feeling at midnight, as if some one were dying in the darkness. Did he not write verses on it too, when 'the foolish, fond Old Year' was out like the despised king in the night and the storm?

On April Fool's Day, the children were alert with fun to make a fool of papa, and were caught in the attempt; and in July there came a holiday—the anniversary of that happy marriage. At Nahant, it was celebrated by a sail; waiting beforehand with his boys in the school-room, he saw the masts of the boats outside reflected like corkscrews in the water—'two corkscrews that will soon uncork the schoolroom, and let these effervescing spirits free'—an echo from the wine-cellar of the *Golden Legend*. In the evenings, his wife read aloud—she who was the beautiful and sympathetic companion of his labours and his life; and it was a pleasure to him when his sons were old enough to relish *Don Quixote*, and when his little circle gathered round the pages of Dante, his lifelong study and delight.

But now came the break. Only three summers after that day on the water at Nahant, his wife was laid in her grave on their marriage anniversary; while he remained in his chamber—badly burnt in vainly trying to save her. A lighted match for sealing, and a summer dress, were the origin of that terrible disaster.

In the long, silent agony of grief, his children were his best earthly consolation. After a long time, he tried to occupy his mind with translating Dante; but for all hopefulness and return to life it was to the children he looked. They had their Christmas tree year after year, though

all holidays were sad to him and all brightness lonely; he took care that Christmas still diverted their young thoughts from the sorrow they knew but too well; 'and an unseen presence blessed the scene.' He felt on Valentine's Day that it was something to busy one's self with their small business; and the simple joys of childhood seemed to call him back to life and hope. They flitted about his study, and he had to write the little girls a letter apiece, and then playfully turn them out. One of them spent her leisure in a correspondence with him; the post-office was under her pillow, and she expected to find a letter there every morning. The dolls' birthdays had to be celebrated too, and on one of these great occasions, he purloins the written programme to inclose in his letter to a friend, and adds: 'What a beautiful world this child's world is! so instinct with life, so illuminated with imagination! I take infinite delight in seeing it go on around me, and feel all the tenderness of the words that fell from the blessed lips—"Suffer the little children to come unto me." After that benediction, how can any one dare to deal harshly with a child?'

His tenderness spread far beyond his own home, and was not without return. On his seventy-second birthday, the children of Cambridge gave to him the carved chair, or, as he called it, the throne, made of the wood of the spreading chestnut tree that had overshadowed the village smithy sung by him long ago; and he gave to each child who came to see him on his 'throne' a copy of his poem—

Only your love and your remembrance could  
Give life to this dead wood.

At the close of his days he enjoyed *playing* at playing backgammon with his little grandson. On the very last Saturday of his life, he kindly received four schoolboys from Boston, showed them the objects of interest in his study, and wrote his name in their albums; and it was noticed that during his last illness the boys who passed the house went silently, taking care that no voice sounded in the street.

Such was the character of Longfellow towards young hearts and young lives. His words were genuine in calling children living poems prized beyond all the rest; and in his own journals, now printed in his brother's book, we see him in no aspect more winning than as the little ones' indulgent father and sympathetic friend.

## RICHARD CABLE,

### THE LIGHTSHIPMAN.

#### CHAPTER II.—JOSEPHINE.

THE storm increased to fury as darkness fell. Richard Cable stood on deck. To the south-west was no light whatever, only purple blackness. To the north, however, was a coppery streak, over which hung a whirling, spreading mass of angry vapour, casting down lines of heavy rain in dense bands. Then rapidly the growing darkness wiped out this band of light, and left only the east clear, and the clouds swept overhead like curling waves, and fell beyond, cutting off all sunlight there also, till on all sides nothing was visible but leaping



water and shaken foam-heads; and above, a wild hunt of tearing, galloping clouds, lashed by the wind, with now and then a blinding streak of lightning shot through them, stinging them to fresh paroxysms of flying terror. Richard Cable had ascended to the masthead and kindled the light. The mast was but low, perhaps fifteen feet above the deck, topped with a huge glass globe, that contained a powerful light.

As Cable clung to the mast, he and it and the light swung, and the light described arcs and curves in the sky, against the driving smoky clouds and the gathering night. Now and again a great wave leaped up, and the swaying lamp irradiated its crest, and glared a glittering eye at it, that was reflected by the angry water, which rushed away under the keel, and threw it aloft, as if diving to get away from the blazing eye. The ship reeled and almost plunged its fire-point in the water; it tantalised the waves with it; it heeled almost to overbalance, and held the light above some hissing, hungry wave, which gathered itself together, rose at it to snap, and suddenly, with a whisk and a streak of fiery ribbon, away went the luminous globe, and the wave roared and tore itself to ragged foam in rage at being balked. Then a seamew hovered in the radiance of the lamp, beating its long white wings about it, coming out of the darkness and spray-dust that filled the air, and disappearing back into it again, as man comes out of the Unknown, flickers a little span in the light of Life, and dives back into the Unknown. The wind had shifted several points, but it was hard for Cable to make out from whence it blew; the lightship was anchored, and swung about her anchor, seemingly describing circles, pitching, tossing, heading at the wind, running before it, brought up with a jerk, lurching sullenly at it. She was moored to a couple of anchors, one of them a 'mushroom' (so called from its shape), for greater security against dragging, and Cable had paid out more chain to each. In such a gale, with such rollers, she must be given room to battle with the sea. Cable was by no means satisfied that she could hold where she was. The bank on which she was anchored was a shifting bank, formed by the swirl of the water round the ness; a treacherous bank, that formed and reformed, that was now a strip, then a disc, that eased this way and that, according to the drift of the sea at equinoctial gales. He looked landwards, but saw nothing, no blink of light from behind the willows, where lay Hanford; and outside Hanford, near the beach, a little white cottage with green windows, and under its brown tile roof seven little fair heads on white pillows.

As he stood looking through the darkness in the direction of the sleeping heads, he was startled by a voice at his elbow.

'Captain, is the worst over?'

'Miss! You should not be here.'

'I cannot help myself; I was suffocating below. I fancied we must part our anchor. I have plenty of pluck. My strength, not my courage, failed me in the boat. I lost my head because I was losing consciousness. I am well again. Is the gale spent?'

There was a lull in the wind, though the waves were still running. 'You must go below—you must indeed,' said Cable.—'No; the gale is not

over; it goes as a teetotum spins, and we're now at the peg. Wait, and it will be on us harder than ever again.'

'Can I be of any assistance?'

'You!' Cable laughed. 'Yes, go down below and be ballast.'

The girl was in his pilot coat, which he had thrown over her on the floor. She wore his glazed hat. The hair that had been dispersed was gathered in a knot again.

'If we are likely to drown,' she said, 'I will not drown in the hold, like a mouse in a cage.'

'Go down at once, whilst you may. You will be swept overboard if you stay here.'

'I will not,' she answered. 'Lash me to the mast, and let me look death and the storm in the face.'

Cable saw that it was in vain to argue with her. There was no time to be lost; he heard the roar of the gale again approaching.

'Here!' she said; 'this is my leather strap. Pass it round the mast and my waist. It is long and it is strong. Quick!'

He obeyed with a growl: 'Girls are more unruly nor boys.'

The storm was on them again. It had paused to gather strength, and then rush in concentrated fury and accumulated force to destroy the defiant little lightship, that tossed its glittering head so dauntlessly, even defiantly, in its teeth.

They could hear it coming far away, in a roar that waxed in volume, and seemed like an enveloping thunder when it smote them with foam and a blast that struck like an open hand. But the wind was not one handed, but as a Briareus, many armed, tearing while it bellowed at what it could not beat down. At the stress of the blow, one of the cables gave way, a link having snapped somewhere under water. Then the main anchor, the chain having got foul of it, began to drag, and at once the lightship was adrift, at the mercy of wind and sea, swept before the hurricane. From force of habit, Cable flew to the helm, but as quickly dropped it again. He was helpless. The dragging of the anchor kept the vessel's head to wind, which was so far in their favour, and also steadied her to some extent. Now and then the anchor caught for a moment, and then let go again, and the craft was driven farther out, always heading to the wind, like a living being forced to retreat, but reluctant to yield an inch to the infuriated assailants.

Cable looked at the girl, on whom the flicker of the lamp fell; she did not cry, or, if she did, he did not hear her. She was fast bound by the belt, and stood, apparently as firm as the mast to which she was strapped. Cable folded his arms. He could do nothing. He thought of his little ones. Had they prayed that night, before going to rest, for their father? Never had he more needed their prayers. He thought he knew the danger that threatened; but he did not. He saw indeed that shipwreck was imminent; but he little imagined that another and very different shipwreck menaced him. How old were the seven daughters of Richard Cable? The eldest was just thirteen; then came the twins of eleven; then a child of ten; and the pan-pipe descended in a regular fall to the baby, aged a year. They had come so fast as to exhaust the strength of

the mother, who had died shortly after giving life to the youngest.

Richard Cable raised his eyes, half-blind with salt, and, through the film of brine, looked at the swaying lamp, that seemed to blaze with prismatic colours, and shoot forth rays and draw them in again, like a fiery porcupine. And then he thought no more of the light and the darkness in which it danced, and saw far away into dream-land. Then through the cold salt spray on his face, a warm sweat broke forth.

'Poor little ones!' he said; 'if I am taken, whatever will become of them!'

At that moment he heard the girl's voice: 'Mr Cable! Loosen the band—my arms are frozen.'

Her voice jarred on him at that moment, he knew not why; but it called him back from the consideration of his children to thoughts about her. He went to her and did what she required. He didn't speak to her; and, when he had complied with her wishes, he went back to the place where he had stood before. He tried to think of his home, of his children, and could not; her face, her voice had distracted him, and disturbed the visions he tried to call up.

How much of the night passed thus, he did not know; he was roused by a grating sound, that made itself felt in every fibre of his body. The ship was aground; she had struck, not on a rock, but on a sandbank. Cable stood for a moment motionless. Then a wave came, raised the bows, ran amidships, then to the stern, and carried the vessel farther on the bank. Thereupon, Cable left his place and came to the mast. 'Miss Cornelis,' he said, 'we're aground. I believe my little ones' prayers have helped me to-night.' He laid his hand on the mast and grasped the thong that bound Josephine. 'Young lady,' he said, 'in ten minutes we shall know our fate.' He stood still, holding the thong. He said no more for full twenty minutes. The vessel lay over somewhat on one side, and the water she had shipped poured out of her lee scuppers.

'I can see the horizon on the south-south-west,' said the girl.

'Yes; the worst of the gale is over.'

The waves no longer washed the deck.

'The tide is ebbing,' said Cable. He unlashed Josephine. 'Danger is over. Turn in and sleep.'

'But you?'

'I stay on deck a while, and then I shall coil up in the fore-castle.'

'Good-night,' she said, and held out her hand.

'I wish you sleep,' he said in reply. 'Mind the knitting-pins and the little sock in the cabin. They may be on the floor—anywhere.'

Next morning, Cable woke early. The sun was shining. He descended the ladder to the outer cabin. Almost at the same moment the girl threw open the door and stood in it. She wore her blue serge gown. Her hair was fairly smoothed, though she was unprovided with brushes, and the leather belt was about her waist. She laughed. Her cheeks were flushed and her eyes sparkled. 'Not in Davy Jones' locker, after all,' she said. 'I must run on deck and look around me.'

'And I, Miss Cornelis, will get the fire lighted, the kettle boiling, and some breakfast ready.'

Half an hour later, both were together on deck. The vessel was not so much inclined that it was difficult to walk the deck. When she had struck, the sand was in motion, and she had subsided almost upright in it. The morning was fresh, the sky clear, but for some lagging, white, fleecy clouds that flew high aloft after the storm. Except for the roll of the sea and the foam-wreaths round the bank, every trace of the terrible hurricane was gone. That storm had been short and violent; it had spun its spiral course over land and sea, doing damage wherever it passed; it had strewn the Essex level land with up-turned elms; it had torn the leaves of the chestnuts to threads, and blackened the young beech as if a breath from a furnace had seared them. Here and there it had taken a rick and sifted it and scattered the straw over the adjoining fields. It had ripped roofs and tossed the brown tiles about and heaped them like russet autumn leaves. At sea it had caught and foundered coal-barges from the North, and sunk fishing-smacks. It had torn great gaps in seawalls, like the bites made by children's teeth in rounds of bread and butter. It had twisted and turned about old sandbanks, had swept some away, and torn channels where had been no road. For some miles out to sea, for two or three days, there was neither crystalline purity nor amethyst blue in the water; it was cloudy and brown with the mud it had churned and that it held in suspension. Along the shore lay wreaths of foam, not white, but brown; not evanescent as a bubble, but drying into a crust.

The lightship lay far away from the zone of turbid sea, and the ocean about the bank in which she was wedged was deeply blue, full of laughter, and shake of silver curl, as though bent on passing off its late fury-fit as an excusable frolic.

'Where are we?' asked Josephine.

'I fancy that I know,' answered Cable; 'but without a chart, I cannot make you understand. Now here we must bide till we are taken off, and you may tell me what brought you to the lightship.'

'I was out rowing yesterday afternoon,' said the girl, 'and I was caught unawares, the storm came on so suddenly. I rowed against the wind till I could row no more, and I saw I could do nothing. I was being carried out to sea; and then I felt that my only chance was to reach your vessel.'

'That was wise of you. But your father should not have let you come out alone.'

'Oh, I go out, and go alone, when I choose.'

'But—if he had looked at the glass, he would have seen the fall.'

'I did not ask his leave. I went because I wanted fresh air, to blow the bad thoughts out of my head that troubled me.'

'Bad thoughts trouble you?' exclaimed Cable, and looked steadily at her out of his crystalline blue eyes, clear and sparkling as the sea that surrounded them. 'I should not have supposed that possible. Where the head is that of an angel, one does not expect that it shall hold bad thoughts. No one looks for explosives in a porcelain vase.'

Josephine laughed a short impatient laugh, and tossed her chin. The elastic was tight; she

put her finger under it; the skin was compressed and reddened by the band.

She was a handsome dark girl, with transparent olive skin, and large lustrous eyes like agates. The lashes were long; when she half-closed her lids, they gave a languor to the orbs, dispelled at once when full lifted. Her cheek flushed not the rose pink, but the ripe hue of the apricot. She had very dark hair, a rounded chin, broad temples; was firmly built. To any one experienced in detecting types, a tinge of Jewish blood would have been recognised in the features and hue. 'Well,' she said, and laughed again, 'the hurricane has blown my bad thoughts out of my head, as it has carried the down from the willow flowers, and scattered them—heaven knows where. Woe be to him who picks them up!—they will detonate and injure his hands.'

'Were they so bad?'

'You said yourself—explosives.'

'Miss Cornellis, I made a clumsy comparison. If I may ask—What were these thoughts?'

She fidgeted with her feet and plucked at the elastic band. In her nervous confusion, she drew it out, let it slip, and the elastic snapped on her delicate skin so sharply as to make her cry out. Then she took off her hat, and holding her knees, swung the hat from her finger, and let the wind play with her hair, and unravel it, and scatter it and toss about the short growth over her brow.

'Were the thoughts like to explode?' asked Cable.

'The questions you put to me are not fair, captain,' said the girl. 'My thoughts are my own.'

'Not a bit, Miss Cornellis: you said yourself they were blown about for any one to pick up.'

'Well—and I am too much indebted to you to wish you to gather them. They are dangerous. Hands off!' She hugged her knees, and played with the string of her cap, and looked at the plunging waves on the sand. Her brow darkened, and her eyes lost their sparkle. 'Captain, when shall we get home—I to my worries, you to your babes?'

Cable shook his head. 'We must wait. Ah, miss, patience is an article of which a good cargo is laid in, in a lightship. One consumes a lot of it in a fortnight—separated from all one loves at home, and with none to speak to but a lout of a boy with no more intelligence than a jelly-fish.'

'I should think it pleasant to live in a lightship. I could be well content to stay where I am now. If I go home, I shall get into troubles again.'

'But—what are your troubles?'

'I'm adrift,' said the girl. 'As I stood bound to the mast last night, and the wind and the waves carried the boat and me where they would, I thought it was a picture of myself morally. You have your seven little anchors holding you. I have nothing. You are tied by many little fibres to hearth and home. I have none of these fibres: if I have, they hold to nothing.'

She was still looking before her. She put the elastic band of her hat between her teeth and bit and tore till it parted.

'There!' said Cable. 'Now, how are you to keep your hat on?'

She looked at the broken string. 'I did not know what I was about,' she said; 'I was thinking my thoughts again.'

'I see,' said Cable. 'These same thoughts are not wholesome; they hurt her who harbours them and those they concern.'

'Yes,' she said; 'they drive me mad. I do not know what to do, where to go. I care for no tie any more than that of my hat I have torn. I would tear any one of them that restrained me.'

'I do not understand you,' said the lightshipman, shaking his head. 'I've seven little girls at home, and I'd be sorry to think any one of them should grow up with such thoughts as you have in your head.'

'They will not. Do not be afraid. They will always look up to and respect you. Did you not see how the lantern swung at the masthead all through the storm? It never went out; it burned all night; no wave engulfed it. We could always look up to that. You are the light to the little vessel of your family, and your children will look up to that.'

'And you, my dear young lady?'

'I—I have no light above me.'

'And what about helm and helmsman, compass, chart, Miss Cornellis?'

'I have nothing, neither helm nor helmsman, nor compass, chart, nor anchor, nor light. I am—drifting—a derelict.'

#### SOME INTERESTING GEOLOGICAL ITEMS.

ALL things new and old are weighed in the balance of searching inquiry and assayed in the crucible of fierce criticism. Every increase of knowledge throws a more powerful glare upon the things that are. As the light is concentrated and directed to the events of history or the beliefs of the present, some of them shrivel up and pass off in the smoke of exploded error. The gold of truth comes out purified from the dross of superstition, and as the lake flashes back the sunbeams from its surface, so it sends back reflections from the searching light thrown upon it, and thereby stands more clearly revealed. It is, then, not surprising that the characters of many of our kings should be found varying with the amount of light thrown upon them. Now, a monarch's character appears in bright colours; and then, again, the increased light shows it much darker—the brightness has perhaps been only whitewash laid on by some partial historian. In other cases, some blots disappear as the light grows stronger—they have, perchance, been only mud thrown by some enemy. It is, however, strange and unexpected that geology should step in to correct the historian, and remove a grave stain from the character of one of England's kings. We have all felt how greatly to the discredit of our First William was that making of the New Forest, of which we read in our histories. We learn how he laid waste villages, and drove out the inhabitants to make a royal hunting-ground. Our histories relate it as a fact, and cast no shadow of doubt upon it. And now, geology steps in, and says that

such a thing never happened. An examination of the geological features of the New Forest has led to this remarkable conclusion. 'To the eye of the geologist,' says Professor Ramsay, 'it easily appears that the wet and unkindly soil produced by the clays and gravels of the district forms a sufficient reason why in old times, as now, it never could have been a cultivated and populous country, for the soil for the most part is poor, and probably chiefly consisted of native forest-land [that is, uncultivated land] even in the Conqueror's day.'

And so this voice-geological bids us acquit our monarch of a stain which has rested on his name these long centuries. Shall we, then, accept this evidence as conclusive, and let go the long-cherished bit of history? We can only reply in the words of Aristotle: 'The matter is before you—judge of it.' There are, however, two historical considerations which should have made our chroniclers pause ere they accepted the story. In the first place, forests and wild beasts were, we should suppose, only too plentiful in England at that period. A vast area of the country was covered with woods, which doubtless swarmed with wild animals of various kinds. Is it likely that under such circumstances, any one would take the trouble to make a forest for hunting? And then, William I. being a foreigner, and having taken land from the natives for his own followers, stories to his discredit would be sure to arise. Some of this false coinage would be very likely to be circulated by historians.

Not only has the light of geological truth been thrown over the broad fields of knowledge, but it has also penetrated into various out-of-the-way corners and brought to light many odd and unsuspected facts. To account for the smaller number of reptiles in Ireland, tradition says they were driven out by St Patrick. And even on this obscure problem geology has shed a light, and given a scientific reason for the fact. It has been well established by geological reasoning that Britain has been again and again united to the continent, and as many times severed from it. Here, then, is the key to explain the mystery of the reptiles. It appears that there are twenty-two native species in Belgium, eleven in England, and only five in Ireland. Professor Edward Forbes drew attention to this, and explained it by supposing that they migrated from the continent westward while Britain and Ireland were united to it. Suppose them spreading from some continental centre towards our land. We know that different species vary greatly in their powers of colonising: some spread quickly, and others slowly. During the continuance of a continental epoch, some of the faster-spreading species would get as far as Ireland; others, not so quick, would only get to England; while some would not have time to get even as far. And so, when the continuity of land was broken up, Ireland had received fewer than England, and England itself only a portion of the continental species; and it may be that Ireland was separated from England before the latter was severed from the continent. The smaller native flora of Ireland is accounted for by the same facts.

Geology is no respecter of nations. Not only does it show us our proud island as a mere fragment of the continent, but we are also assured

that some of our chief rivers were only tributaries of the Rhine. We fear that some patriotic politicians will have a quarrel with geology on this point. During a portion of the glacial period, the land was covered, or nearly so, by the sea, and afterwards united to the continent, chiefly by a plain of boulder clay. Through this plain, Professor Ramsay thinks the Rhine wandered to its mouth in the north part of the North Sea; while the Thames, the Tyne, the rivers of the Wash and Humber, and possibly some Scottish rivers, were its tributaries. Thus the solid lands and the constant rivers are shown to be mere passing phases in an ever-changing picture.

The political geography of Europe has undergone great changes in historic times: geology tells of extensive physical changes in the more distant past. The outlines of a physical geography very different from that of to-day have been sketched out for us in the caves and on the rocks. Geologists have transferred the sketch to paper in the ordinary style of map-drawing. Here is an outline of it: The Bristol Channel is a fertile valley, where the horse, bison, elk, mammoth, and rhinoceros browse on the rich herbage. Lions, wolves, and other beasts of prey pursue and devour them, where now the salt waves roll. The British Isles are united to the continent, and the Rhine flows along a great valley, now the North Sea, and is joined by its tributaries the Elbe, Thames, &c. Extensive valleys occupy the sites of the English and St George's Channels, where the herbivora graze, and are pursued by their carnivorous contemporaries. Spain, and Italy with Sicily, being respectively joined to Africa, divide the Mediterranean into two large lakes; Corsica and Sardinia united form a great promontory, stretching out into the most western of these. Across these connecting areas, the animals of Africa—the lion, spotted hyena, Kafir cat, serval, antelope, and African elephant—pass into Europe. After long ages, their remains are found in the caves, to testify of this former state of things.

Geology receives aid from every other science, and in return throws back light upon each. Meteorology, or the science of the weather, is one on which geology largely depends; it furnishes the key-note for the resolution of many geological problems. In return, geology has enriched it with many interesting facts with regard to the weather of the ages that are gone. Rain-prints and ripple-marks on slabs of sandstone or shale tell us that the rain fell, and that the wind ruffled the surface of the water. Rounded fragments and striated pebbles tell us of rivers rolling along their gravel, and glaciers moving down the valleys. Such evidence is so common and well known, that it ceases to surprise us. When, however, we hear that there is good geological evidence to show that in times so remote as the Silurian, the prevailing winds in this region were westerly, as they are to-day, our wonder can no longer be restrained. Evidence of the prevailing westerly winds in the present is seen in the one-sided growth of trees towards the east in exposed situations. The growth of large towns towards the west, to avoid the smoke from the manufacturing quarters, is another proof. And what is the witness of the rocks to a similar prevalence in the past? Long ago, when the rocks which we call Silurian were being laid down, Wales was a centre of volcanic



activity. Mount Snowdon is formed of the products of the volcanoes of the period, interstratified with contemporaneous sedimentary rocks. The roots of some of these old volcanoes have been found and examined. The ash-beds around them thin out very rapidly towards the west, while to the east and north they are much thicker. Towards the east they thicken for a space, and then thin out. It is evident that the greater part of the lighter volcanic products fell to the east of the mountain. The natural explanation is, that the wind blew more strongly and frequently from the west and south-west than from other quarters.

Geology teaches us that countless forms of life have passed away, as far as we can tell, for ever:

From scarpèd cliff and quarried stone,  
She cries, a thousand types are gone.

Species and genera which once had a local habitation on earth have disappeared from the stage, and have now only a name; and not only species and genera, but whole orders have gone, leaving only their epitaphs on the gravestones which mark their last resting-places. And yet, side by side with this, we are brought face to face with the remarkable constancy of other species. In the Silurian rocks, which occupy the lowest place but two (Cambrian and Laurentian) in the geological chronology, we are taught that 'remains of foraminifera, some of them apparently identical with existing forms, have been detected in various places.' And in the Cretaceous rocks, some of the foraminifera are the same as those now dredged up from the bottom of the ocean.

As we ascend the scale of time, leaving behind us the shadowy realms of the far past, and come to the most recent rocks, we find the labours of the geologist mingled with those of the archaeologist and historian. In their united labours we have a cord of threefold strand to draw up the full buckets of knowledge from the wells of the past. In the study of the caves, the three sciences alluded to overlap, and their devotees work together. Volumes of interesting lore, fascinating as the legends of fairyland or the magic tales of Arabia, are there written in the hieroglyphics of vaulted dome and hanging stalactite, of buried bone and coin and implement of varied use. The many races of men who inhabited the land in prehistoric times appear again on the scene; something of their manner of life is revealed. Again they hunt the mammoth bison and bear over the broad plains and through the thick forests. At one time we see them using the dog, the horse, and the hare for food. Strange revolutions have taken place in this matter of diet. The dog early passed out of favour, and its use has not been revived. The horse was used as food in Roman Britain and after the English invasion; it was afterwards forbidden by the Church, because used by the Scandinavians in honour of their god Odin; now, it is used in France and other countries. The Britons, however, would not eat the hare—it was held to be unlawful to do so. The revolving hand of time has changed this, and we now accept the hare as fit for food.

Even the rude artists of those primitive times when man was a cave-dweller have left us specimens of their skill. In the caves of Dordogne, in

the south of France, are found horns and bones with spirited carvings of reindeer, bison, ibex, and birds done upon them. One of the most interesting of these relics is the portrait of a mammoth carved on a tusk of the same, from the cave of La Madelaine, in Dordogne. Simple as these artistic attempts are, they tell us that man was not altogether uncivilised. This must be admitted, even if we regard these carvings as the most advanced art of that day, which, perhaps, we have no right to do.

What part of the art of to-day will be recorded in the stony pages of the geological future? Not the highest, assuredly; and so it may have been in the past. The bold and striking, though simple, likeness of the mammoth seems to tell us that the artist had seen and hunted it full often. We see him sitting at the entrance of his cave after the excitement of the chase and the satisfaction of the subsequent feast, engraving the likeness of the animal on its own tusk! Thus, as the painter takes simple mineral powders and vegetable extracts, and with them makes the canvas eloquent with glowing pictures of life, so imagination works up the dry bones of fact until the past is again enacted before us.

## TOLD BY TWO.

A NOVELETTE IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAP. II.—THE NARRATIVE OF WILLIAM HENRY GARNER CONTINUED.

My destination was reached in due course; then followed supper and bed at the hotel. Immediately after breakfast, I and my bag were driven in a fly to the colliery offices. Here I found Mr Wharton, the cashier, waiting for me as usual. After the customary greetings, he produced his bunch of keys and proceeded to unlock the bag, or rather, he proceeded to endeavour to do so, for, strange to relate, the bag obstinately refused to be unlocked. Mr Wharton stared at me, and I stared at him. 'What mystery is here?' he asked.

My flesh began to creep, but I did not answer. Then he took up the bag and examined it carefully.

'Why, Garner, what have your people been about?' he said. 'Why didn't they tell you that they were sending you with a fresh bag? No wonder my key won't open it.'

'A fresh bag!' was all I could gasp.

'Undoubtedly. This is not the bag Mr Mimms used to bring, which you have brought every week since. This one is the same size, and apparently of the same material as the other; but that it isn't the old one, I am certain.'

'No one told me about sending the money in a different bag,' I contrived to stammer out.

'Then they ought to have told you, that's all,' responded the cashier dryly.

I was full of horrible misgivings, which, however, as yet did not formulate themselves into anything definite even in my own mind.

'There's only one thing to be done,' said Mr Wharton after an awkward pause, 'and that is, to cut the confounded thing open.' He glanced



at the clock. 'I shall have the off-turn hands here in an hour's time, and it won't do to keep them waiting. I'll give you a note to take back to Mr Yarrell, explaining the circumstances of the case, and that you are in no way to blame.' Then with a laugh he added: 'Why, Garner, my buck, you look as white as if you had seen a ghost, or as if you had smoked a strong cigar on an empty stomach, which, I daresay, would have much the same effect on you.'

I was in no mood for banter. I turned to the window while Mr Wharton went into the outer office in search of something wherewith to open the bag. Presently he returned with a clasp-knife having a long pointed blade, with which he at once proceeded to cut a slit in the bag large enough to allow the insertion of his hand. 'What have we here?' he said wonderingly, as he drew forth a small canvas bag, tightly tied, and full of something which was certainly not gold. Too impatient to untie the knot, he cut it with his knife and poured the contents on the table. Those contents were nothing but sand!

For a moment or two the room and everything in it wavered and grew indistinct before my eyes, and I was compelled to clutch at the table to keep myself from falling.

'There has been foul play here without a doubt,' said the cashier in deep hard tones. 'I hope to goodness, Garner, you have had no hand in it,' he added as he glanced keenly at me from under his shaggy brows.

I did not speak: I could not.

With what seemed to me like a species of cold-blooded deliberation, he now proceeded to draw out of the slit one bag after another, each precisely similar in appearance to the first one, and each filled with the same kind of coarse heavy sand. I watched his proceedings in a sort of fascinated stupor. I had a feeling as if for the time being I had lost my identity and had been changed into some one else. When the last bag had been taken out and emptied, the cashier's keen eyes fixed me again. 'As I said before, Garner, I hope you have had no hand in this affair.'

My silence and evident discomposure had aroused his suspicions. But at last I found my tongue. 'Is it at all likely, Mr Wharton,' I said a little indignantly, 'that if I had had any hand in substituting a bag full of sand for one full of money, I should have been such an idiot as to bring it to you, of all people in the world? Had I wanted to abscond with the money, there was nothing to hinder me from doing so last night, or to have prevented me from being a couple of hundred miles away by this time.'

'Your remarks are logical and to the point, my boy. I was wrong to suspect you. But what, then, has become of the money? Are you sure—are you positively certain—that this is the same bag you brought away from the bank last evening?'

I hung my head. 'When I entered this room I could have sworn that it was; but now I have my doubts.'

'Um. You never let the bag out of your sight, of course?'

His question caused me to tingle from head to foot. 'Mr Wharton, let us sit down for five

minutes and I will tell you everything,' I said in desperation.

So I told him all that had happened from the moment of my leaving the bank, exactly as I have set it down here. He listened without interrupting me by a word; but his grave face grew graver still as I went on with my narrative, and when I came to the end of it, he sat for a full minute without speaking.

'Garner, I am sorry for you,' he said at last. 'You have been robbed—robbed, I repeat, in a most audacious and barefaced manner.'

'You don't mean to say, Mr Wharton?'

'I mean to say that while you were gone to fetch that glass of water, short as was the time you were away, the two women, who were without doubt confederates, possessed themselves of your bag and substituted this one in its place.'

I stared aghast. It seemed incredible, and I stammered out a remark to that effect.

'Pooh!' he said with a little contemptuous shrug. 'What can you, who are little more than a boy, know about the tricks, the schemes, and the dodges of the great world of knavery? There can be no doubt that this robbery has been planned for a considerable period, in all probability before you began to act as messenger. How this class of people contrive to obtain their information is a mystery to me, but they do obtain it somehow.'

'But where did this bag come from, and what became of the real bag?' I asked. 'The only article of luggage the two women had between them was—'

'An oblong black leather case: those are your own words. Man alive! can't you see that during the two minutes you were away, they had ample time to take this bag out of the case and pop yours in its place! There is no doubt that Mr Mimms, or you, or both of you, have been furtively watched and followed week after week for some time past. This bag, as I said before, is almost a fac-simile of the old one; they have even been clever enough to gauge the weight pretty accurately. Pity so much cleverness wasn't applied to a better purpose!' He rose and pushed back his chair. 'I must hurry off to our local bank and borrow what I can towards the wages,' he said. 'As for you, I should advise you to get back by the first train and make a clean breast of it to Mr Yarrell; but, by Jove, I shouldn't care to stand in your shoes when you tell him!'

I never spent a more miserable three hours than those occupied by my journey back to Bemerton. I took a cab at the station and drove direct to Mr Yarrell's house. It was Saturday, and I knew he would have left the bank by that time. I told my tale precisely as I had told it to Mr Wharton. He listened in ominous silence—at the bank we all knew that he was to be feared most when he said the least—and when I had come to an end, he simply rang the bell and sent a servant with a message requesting the immediate presence of the superintendent of police or his deputy. The superintendent answered the summons in person. Then for the third time my story had to be told, my heart sinking lower and lower at each repetition. Then followed a string of questions from the superintendent, the answers to which he jotted down

in his notebook. It was evident to me that his theory of the robbery agreed in the main with that of Mr Wharton.

When all was over, Mr Yarrell said to me in his iciest tones: 'You may go now, Garner. You will be at the office at nine on Monday as usual. It will be for the Board to determine what further steps it may be requisite to take in this most unfortunate affair.'

I must pass over what followed as briefly as may be.

Mr Yarrell was one of those men who never forgive a blunder or condone an error of judgment. In his eyes, the thing I had been guilty of almost assumed the proportions of a crime, and I felt only too sure in my own mind that in his statement of the case to the Board all lenient touches on the score of my youth and inexperience would be forgotten or overlooked, and that in the picture he would draw, all the shadows would be elaborately filled in. My sentence was not long in being promulgated. In the first place, I was severely reprimanded; in the second, my promised advance of salary was cancelled; and in the third place, I was relegated to a position in the office which I had held upwards of two years previously. This virtually meant a sentence of ruin as far as my career with the Bemerton Banking Company was concerned. I knew that all prospect of promotion was over, if not for ever, at least for long years to come; but I had no mind to sit down quietly and sink into a miserable underpaid drudge, like one or two others whom I saw about me.

Meanwhile, I stayed on at the bank, hoping from day to day that some clue would be forthcoming which would lead to the arrest and conviction of the thieves, and so prove to the world that I had been guilty of nothing more criminal than an act of youthful carelessness; for it had been whispered to me that in certain quarters it had been hinted that I knew more of the robbery than I chose to divulge; and circumstances which came to my knowledge later on led me to suspect that all my comings and goings about this time were quietly watched without my being in the least aware of it. To a certain extent, however, the story I had told was backed up by confirmatory evidence. Two females answering the description given by me were traced as having taken a cab at the Sherrington Station, and as having been driven across country to a station on another line of railway five miles away. Thence they would seem to have doubled back to Bemerton, at which station they were seen, and there they were supposed to have hired another conveyance; but for any further clue which could be found, they might have been spirited away on one of those magical carpets I used to read about when I was a child.

During those weeks of waiting and suspense, a project had been slowly ripening in my mind, and the more I considered it, the more it grew in favour with me. I had a cousin in Australia who owned several thousand acres of sheep-run. Frank had often pressed me to go out and join him; but, for various reasons, I had hitherto declined doing so. Now, however, that my prospects of advancement at the bank were blighted,

my cousin's offer began to look more alluring than it had ever looked before. The one objection there was to the scheme, and it was a very grave one in my eyes, was, that it would separate Emmeline and me for an indefinite period. If it seemed hard now not to be able to see her for more than a few hours once every six months—she was governess in a family who lived among the far-away Yorkshire moors—what would it seem like with twelve thousand miles of ocean between us? But it was a question that concerned Em. quite as deeply as myself; so, taking advantage of the Easter holidays, I ran down by rail to Crutchley Priory, where she lived. By good fortune Em's pupils happened to be away on a visit; so we were enabled to have many long happy rambles together through the old priory woods, which will always hold a sweet place in my memory. What a brave-hearted, high-spirited girl she was! Her counsel was, that I should go out and join my cousin without delay. She would wait, she said, though it might be a dozen years, till I should be ready to send for her; and when the time came, she would leave everything to obey my summons.

Six weeks later, I had said good-bye to Old England and every one in it for long years to come.

#### A FEW COMMON ERRORS.

It is not always an easy matter to trace a popular error to its source; but we shall endeavour, as we proceed in the following enunciation of a few of the commonest, to assign to each some definite and plausible origin. We do not refer to that class of fallacy which is founded on the popular belief in some common saying or proverb, nor on some erroneous notion concerning the dealings of man with man, but to misconceived ideas concerning some of the simple workings of nature that are constantly taking place around us. Fallacies—or some may prefer the term illusions—abound on endless subjects; but whichever be the term employed, both may fairly be included under the common heading 'errors,' for such they really are.

It is by no means uncommon to find educated men and women obstinately dispute the fact of moist air being lighter than dry air. They say they cannot understand how anything can be made lighter by being moistened, and their almost invariable illustration is that of a sponge. It certainly at first sight does appear an anomaly when put in this way; but it is just this false way of putting it that has been their stumbling-block. If asked why the mercury in a barometer rises in fine weather when the air is dry, and falls in bad weather when the air is full of moisture, we find, as a rule, that they are unacquainted with the principle of the Toricellian vacuum, or that they have remained content with the knowledge that the mercury does so rise and fall.

That smoke is lighter than air is another very common belief, and this doubtless arises from the

smoke issuing from a chimney being invariably seen to ascend; but if we follow the warm smoke in its upward course, we shall find that as soon as it has lost the impetus derived from the draught in the flue, and has in addition become cool and condensed, that it begins to descend, for the most part in the annoying shape of 'blacks.' The simplest way of proving this is to fill a clay or other pipe, and, having lighted it, to insert the mouthpiece in a basin of cold water, and then to blow down the bowl, when the smoke that issues, having been cooled in passing up through the water, will be seen to rest on the top of it, but will not ascend, owing to its being heavier than the air.

There is a very common superstition that sewer and other poisonous gases are more deadly *in themselves* when they are inodorous than when they appeal forcibly to the olfactory nerve. We do not of course refer to those venomous gases which are originally void of scent, such as nitrogen, but to such pungent ones as carburetted hydrogen or coal gas, the fragrance of which is unmistakable. The fact is that gases may be deprived of their smell without losing their destructive properties, by passing up through a sufficient depth of earth, &c.; just as filtration will remove impurities mechanically suspended in water, but not those held in chemical solution; and it is this circumstance of not being able to detect their presence by the smell that is so dangerous, as we receive no warning of the virulent poison we are inhaling, the principal function of the nose, namely, that of intimating to the brain the approach of a volatile substance unsuitable to the system, being rendered inoperative.

We noticed not long ago, in a newly built house, all the doors and windows hermetically sealed, while every available gas jet both in stoves and lamps was being kept at full blaze, in order to dry the walls. No plan better calculated to defeat the object in view could have been adopted, for the simple reason, that the combustion of gas produces moisture. That this is not a solitary case, the following couple of incidents, taken from a back number of *The Builder*, will show. 'I was much puzzled for some time,' says the writer, 'by a solicitor's strong-room, which I had built, obstinately refusing to become dry, although favourably situated for the process, and a jet of gas being kept burning day and night. The consequence, however, was that the papers and parchments became flaccid and damp. The mischief has been entirely and speedily remedied by inserting two ventilating bricks and extinguishing the gas,' clearly proving that where there is no ventilation, gas, instead of exciting evaporation, produces moisture, and consequently condensation. The other case is as follows: 'In a lobby, the gas was left burning for five hours, when the paper on the walls was found to be saturated with moisture, and where, as on varnished parts, it could not be absorbed, the moisture hung in great drops, as if a pipe had leaked.' We fear that this fallacy must be attributed solely to ignorance.

We have frequently met with people who consider that it would be sheer madness to attempt to build a house upon sand, and it is

difficult to persuade them that such an idea is erroneous. The reason for this belief is in most cases based upon the scriptural comparison between the man who built his house upon the sand and he who built it upon a rock, the sequence being either forgotten or ignored—namely, that 'the floods came.' It was then, and not till then, that the house fell; for sand will only form a sure foundation so long as it can be kept dry and in its place. The common epithets applied to sand, for example, the 'shifting' sand, may also have helped to form this misconceived idea; but when desirous of clenching the argument, we have only to point to the Pyramids as a convincing proof of our statement.

But perhaps there is a greater amount of misconception concerning lightning than almost any other natural phenomenon. As an example, we may quote those who consider that the lightning invariably 'cometh down from heaven,' and that it never ascends. The tower of Dundry Church, which was struck in March 1859, furnished a clear proof of its ascending, the lightning entering at the base and passing up through the tower. Others, again, from lack of information, have no idea that this earth frequently plays an equal part with the clouds in supplying the electric fluid necessary for the discharge; while many imagine that lightning will set fire to anything it touches; the fact being that the flame of lightning is generally inoffensive, though, under certain circumstances, it may be a consuming and terrible fire.

We will conclude with the mention of a trick over which small bets have often been lost and won—namely, the fact of brandy floating on the top of castor oil. Most people having been accustomed to take this nauseous aperient in milk, sherry, or coffee, have always seen it floating on the top of these fluids, of higher specific gravity than the oil; but brandy being a spirit, is lighter than oil, and consequently reverses the customary order of things. The same of course holds good with regard to all other spirits, owing to their specific gravity being lower than that of the oil extracted from the liver of the cod-fish.

#### SPUR-MONEY.

For several centuries past, and until comparatively recent times, persons wearing spurs in any sacred edifice in England were accosted either by choristers or beadles, who demanded a fee, by way of fine, for thus entering a cathedral, minster, or church, and thereby interrupting the service. Two or three centuries ago, when spurs were commonly worn, the amount received for 'spur-money' was considerable, and singing-boys and beadles were ever on the alert for the ringing of the spurred boot, often to the neglect of their more legitimate duties. Sometimes the choristers lost their perquisite because of their inability to repeat the gamut on the demand of spur-wearing persons. In the *Privy-purse Expenses of King Henry VIII.* (edited by Sir Harris Nicolas) are several entries of payments made to the choristers of Windsor 'in reward for the king's spurs;' which the editor surmises to mean 'money paid to redeem the king's spurs, which

had become the fee of the choristers at Windsor, perhaps at installations, or at the annual celebration of St George's feast.' No notice, however, on the subject occurs either in Ashmole's or Anstis' histories of the order of the Garter.

From the cheque-book of the Chapel-royal, Dr E. F. Rimbault made the following extract of an order made by the Dean in 1622: 'That if anie knight or other persone entituled to weare spurs enter the Chappell in that guise, he shall pay to the quiristers the accustomed fine; but if he command the youngest quirister to repeate his gamut, and he faile in the so doing, the said knight, or other, shall not pay the fine.' This rule was enforced until about the year 1830.

Quoting a note in Gifford's edition of the works of Ben Jonson, Mr Markland says: 'In the time of Ben Jonson, in consequence of the interruptions to divine service occasioned by the ringing of the spurs worn by persons walking and transacting business in cathedrals, and especially in St Paul's, a small fine was imposed on them, called "spur-money," the exaction of which was committed to the beadles and singing-boys.'

Under the title of *The Children of the Chapel stript and whipt*, there was published a curious tract, in which the following passage, bearing upon the subject of spur-money, occurs: 'Wee think it very necessarye that every quorister shoulde bringe with him to church a Testament in English, and turne to everie chapter as it is daily read, or some other good and godly Prayer-book, rather than spend their tyme in talk and hunting after spur-money, whereon they set their whole mindes, and doe often abuse dyvers if they doe not bestowe somewhat on them.'

From *The Memorials of John Ray* we cull the annexed illustration of the practice under notice: 'July 26, 1661, we began our journey northwards from Cambridge, and that day, passing through Huntingdon and Stilton, we rode as far as Peterborough, twenty-five miles. There I first heard the cathedral service. The choristers made us pay money for coming into the choir with our spurs on.'

Spur-money was exacted in Westminster Abbey from Dr Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who handed over an eighteenpenny token as the fine. The penalty was also imposed, about the same time, on the Duke of Cumberland (afterwards king of Hanover) for entering the choir of the same abbey in his spurs; but his Royal Highness, who was installed there, excused himself with great readiness, pleading his right to wear his spurs in that church, inasmuch as it was the place where they were first put on him.

About 1847 or 1848, a party of Sappers and Miners were stationed at Peterborough, engaged in the trigonometrical survey, when the officer entered the cathedral with his spurs on, and was immediately beset by the choristers, who demanded money of him for treading the sacred floor with armed heels. One of the dignitaries was ignorant of the practice, so that we may infer that blackmail was seldom levied at Peterborough forty or fifty years ago.

Spur-money has often been demanded at Southwell Minster, though not recently, the last case

the writer can state definitely occurring just over thirty years ago. A visitor attended service with spurs on, but was surrounded immediately after by several of the choristers. He refused to give anything, so was consequently locked in. He tempted the juveniles with sixpence, which he slipped under the door. This not being considered sufficient, he put a shilling under as well, when, after a good deal of debating amongst the 'songsters,' the offender was released. The custom is said to have been instituted by Henry VIII.

#### QUITE CURED.

MAJOR HENDERSON was the most obstinate man imaginable. For a whole hour, Lieutenant Mapleson tried to convince him that it was the hand and heart of Maude Henderson for which he was pleading, her comfortable little fortune being a matter about which he was supremely indifferent. At the expiration of the hour, Major Henderson's decision remained unchanged.

'Save a thousand pounds as a proof of your attachment to my niece, and I will give my consent to your marriage with her. Under no other circumstances will I do so.' This was the extent to which the major would commit himself.

Save a thousand pounds indeed! Why, a million would be equally possible to a man of refined tastes, with but a paltry two hundred a year or so besides his pay.

Maude waylaid her lover outside the library door. Very pretty she looked as she listened to dear Jack's angry protestations, her cheeks flushing and her brown eyes filling with tears.

'You will be true to me, my darling?' pleaded the impecunious lieutenant, as his arm stole round her waist and his tawny moustache pressed her rosy lips.

True to him? Indeed and indeed she would be!

'You know, dearest, you will be twenty-one in a fortnight's time and your own mistress. My sweet one will fly with her poor loving Jack then; won't she?'

'Yes'—rather dubiously. It was hard to put aside the prospect of being followed to the altar by a bevy of daintily arrayed bridesmaids, although she was so deeply in love.

True, she would soon be of age, and consequently her own mistress, but what would that fact avail her, if she were miles away from her lover? And such indeed seemed likely to be the case, for her uncle carried her off to a small village in North Wales the day after Lieutenant Mapleson had been told his fate. Of course she left a note behind for 'dearest Jack,' telling him the name of the village to which they were going, and earnestly begging him to do 'something,' although she could think of nothing practical to suggest.

On the morning of her twenty-first birthday, Maude came down to breakfast looking fresh, and even a little happy. She had honestly tried to be miserable for a whole fortnight, and had succeeded for two days. With youth and health on one's side, it is almost impossible to be thoroughly out of spirits for any length of time, however much one may be experiencing the truth of the proverb about 'true love, &c.'

The landlady's bright-looking daughter brought



in the coffee and rolls. 'Mrs Evans opposite has let her front rooms, miss,' she volunteered. 'A gentleman all by himself came and took them last night.'

A gentleman, and alone! Maude's spirits rose. 'Did you happen to hear Mrs Evans say what her new lodger is like? I suppose,' added naughty, deceitful Maude, 'he is an elderly gentleman?'

'Yes, miss, quite. He's a bit lame, walks with a stick, and has a long gray beard. His name's Mr Browne.'

Maude's spirits fell again. At breakfast, however, she mentioned the new arrival to her uncle.

Major Henderson was beginning to find North Wales a little dull, so he listened rather readily, thinking that there might perhaps be a prospect of having some one with whom to smoke a friendly pipe.

In the course of the morning, when the uncle and niece were sitting in one of the many beautiful glens in which the neighbourhood abounds, Maude saw a bent figure approaching, walking with a stick.

'I think, uncle, that must be Mr Browne, Mrs Evans' new lodger,' she said.

Her uncle looked up from his book. 'Out of health, I should say,' was Major Henderson's comment. 'He doesn't look old enough to be so infirm.'

When the stranger came up to them, he paused, and inquired the way to the Swallow Falls.

Maude started. That voice! Her uncle, however, merely made a courteous reply. Evidently his suspicions were not aroused.

'Excuse me,' continued the stranger, 'but have I not the pleasure of addressing one who is a neighbour for the time being? I fancied I saw you come out of Honeysuckle Cottage this morning with your daughter.'

'Yes, sir, you are right—at least my niece and I are staying opposite to you.'

'Your niece?' and the stranger politely raised his hat as he glanced at Maude. 'May I inquire if you have been making a long stay in the neighbourhood? It is the first time I have visited North Wales, and I should be glad to know of the principal spots of interest in the immediate vicinity.' My health is so shattered that I cannot undertake long excursions.'

'This is the commencement of our third week,' replied the major. 'Like yourself, we have chosen rather to enjoy the scenery within walking distances, in preference to travelling about by rail or coach. My niece has been a little upset lately, so we came here to recruit her health.'

Maude flushed up indignantly. To speak of the cruel blow which had been dealt her as if it were a mere nothing!

'The young lady is looking so fresh and charming, that I think she must already be on the high road to recovery.' This with a stiff old-fashioned bow to Maude. 'I was about to say I trusted I might derive as much benefit from the change, only I fear that is too much to expect. Age cannot hope to compete with youth.'

'With your permission,' suggested Major Henderson, 'my niece and I will accompany you to the Falls. They are within a quarter-of-an-hour's walk from here; and I can then give you a few hints about the neighbourhood as we go along.'

Mr Browne would be only too pleased.

Maude walked on by her uncle's side experiencing a mixture of joy and alarm. She was so delighted to hear that dear voice again; so fearful lest her lover's stratagem should be discovered!

Mr Browne noticed her agitation, and was careful to divert Major Henderson's attention from his niece, in case her confusion should betray the secret. The trio had to cross a stream by means of stepping-stones. The stranger offered to assist Maude. Managing to keep his back to Major Henderson, Mr Browne, alias Lieutenant Mapleson, tenderly pressed Maude's yielding hand, and with a world of expression in his blue eyes, whispered: 'Be careful, my darling, and all will yet be well with us.'

The next morning Mr Browne called on Major Henderson. 'I have just received these, and I thought you would perhaps like to look at them,' he said, producing a packet of periodicals.

Major Henderson was glad to avail himself of the offer, as current literature was rather difficult to procure in so out-of-the-way a place.

After a little further conversation, Mr Browne was asked if he would care to join the uncle and niece in their morning ramble. Again he would be only too pleased.

When the trio had gone some distance, Major Henderson, wishing to enjoy a quiet half-hour's read, suggested that he should sit down and rest a little, while Maude conducted Mr Browne to a spot close by whence a good view of Snowdon could be obtained.

'I would fain, like you, rest a while,' replied Mr Browne; 'but as the day is so unusually clear, I feel I must make an effort to take advantage of it, especially as this young lady has so kindly consented to act as my guide.' And so Mr Browne hobbled off, with Maude walking patiently beside him.

As soon as the trees had hidden the lovers from view, Jack drew Maude to him, while she, half laughing and half crying, stroked his long gray beard.

'O Jack, whatever made you come like this? What do you intend to do?'

'This, my sweetest;' and the bold lover drew from his pocket a marriage license and a wedding-ring. Half playfully, the gallant lieutenant removed Maude's glove and slipped on the ring. 'What a dear little hand it looks!' he cried rapturously; 'and how happy I shall be when I can call its dear owner my sweet little wife.'

A slight sound fell on their ears, and looking up, they beheld Major Henderson not a hundred yards off!

Maude would have been grateful to the earth had it opened at that moment to receive her, but as it showed no signs of accommodating her, she disengaged herself from Mr Browne's embrace and hastily handed him back the ring.

Mr Browne was equal to the occasion, although he had grave misgivings, as he hobbled towards Major Henderson. 'Were you hastening to join us? You see we haven't got far. I am a wretched walker at the best of times; and in such scenery as this, one feels forced to pause frequently to look around.'

'I expected to meet you coming back,' explained the major. 'But I was looking for you

in that direction,' indicating another path more to the right. 'I was quite surprised when I saw you coming towards me.'

With what feelings of relief did the lovers listen to the major's innocent remarks!

At their early dinner, the major drew from his pocket a letter which he had received by the morning's post, and had forgotten to read. With a polite 'Excuse me, my dear,' to his niece, he hastily glanced at the contents. 'I must leave for London by the eleven o'clock train to-morrow morning,' he exclaimed. 'This letter is of the utmost importance. How stupid of me to have delayed reading it!'

'Am I to accompany you, uncle?' asked Maude faintly.

'No, no, my dear; there's no need for you to do that. I shall be back here by the evening of the following day.'

The major was very preoccupied until dinner was over, but as Maude had also much food for reflection, silence was agreeable to both.

'I wonder if I could do anything for Mr Browne while I am in town?' queried the major.—'My dear,' turning to Maude, 'just write a little note to him asking him to step over for a minute. You know we half promised to show him the way to Fairy Glen this afternoon. I don't feel inclined for any more walking myself; but there is no reason why you shouldn't accompany him, if you are not tired and he is agreeable to the arrangement.'

Maude's note quickly brought Mr Browne; and the lovers were soon on their way to Fairy Glen.

'My darling, we are in luck's way!' exclaimed Jack. 'Your uncle's absence will make matters as simple as an A B C guide. I shall have to-morrow to make the necessary arrangements; we can be married the following morning; and by the time your uncle returns in the evening, we shall be miles away from here.'

Maude acquiesced rather reluctantly. She loved Jack dearly; but still she had some compunction about deceiving her uncle, who, with the exception of the unaccountable obstinacy he had shown towards her lover, had always been ready to humour her. Jack, however, drew such a glowing picture of the happiness in store for them, and declared with so much confidence Major Henderson's anger would not last more than three weeks when once the irrevocable step was taken, that Maude was much comforted.

When they returned, Major Henderson pressed Mr Browne to spend the evening at Honeysuckle Cottage. Tea being over, the major asked Maude if she would mind packing his portmanteau for him.

'I have laid out the things I wish to take, my dear. You will fit them in more neatly than I could.'

Maude was delighted to have an opportunity of doing a last little kindly act.

Directly she had left the room, the major began fidgeting about, and at length got up and paced the room. Suddenly turning to Mr Browne, he said: 'Comparative stranger as you are to me, I feel as if I must tell you the nature of the business which is calling me to London so unexpectedly. The blow has fallen so suddenly, that to speak of it would be an immense relief.'

The stranger was all sympathetic attention in a moment.

'Mr Browne,' continued the major excitedly, 'this time yesterday I believed that poor girl up-stairs to be the mistress of a fairly large fortune. To-day—if the information I received this morning be correct—I know her to be penniless. And that is not all: the greater part, if not the whole, of my own income is lost also.'

So sympathetic was Mr Browne that he begged to know all the details. These, however, the major was unable to furnish; in fact he could explain nothing satisfactorily, so great was the state of excitement into which he had worked himself.

'Hush!' he said, as he heard Maude approaching. 'Not a word to her. I wouldn't disturb her peace of mind for worlds, poor girl, until I am certain how the matter stands.'

The next day, about an hour after her uncle had left for London, Maude received the following pencilled note from Mr Browne:

MY OWN DARLING—I am the most unlucky dog that ever lived! I passed a wretched night, and this morning I am too ill to leave my bed. To be disabled to-day, when I was to have arranged for the event which is to make me the happiest man in England. I have sent for the village 'bones,' and if he can but patch me up, it may not yet be too late. Send a book back by bearer, to account for having received a letter from your nearly frantic JACK.

Poor Maude! The torturing suspense of that day! In the evening she ventured to ask the landlady to inquire how Mr Browne was. 'No better,' was the alarming reply.

Maude passed a sleepless night. In the morning she received a second note from her dear Jack, even more despairing in its tone than the former one. 'Fate is against us,' he wrote; 'I feel as if I shall never be able to call you mine.'

In the middle of the day, she again sent to inquire after her lover; and was overjoyed when she heard he was much better, and was even thinking of getting up, his recovery bidding fair to be as sudden as his seizure.

That evening, Major Henderson returned. Hardly had he knocked at the door, when Mr Browne emerged from the opposite cottage.

'What news, sir?' asked the sympathetic Mr Browne.

'The worst possible,' replied the major, throwing himself into an easy-chair and covering his face with his hands. 'That poor girl yonder is a beggar, and I have but a hundred a year left.'

Maude looked from one to the other in utter bewilderment; and then crossed over to her uncle, trying to comfort him and gain some explanation at the same time.

'I feel this is no scene for a stranger to witness,' said Mr Browne. 'Sir, you have my deepest sympathy, and I am sure that at the present moment I can show it in no better way than by withdrawing.'

Maude followed her lover to the door. She was much distressed on her uncle's account, but did not fully realise her own loss of fortune.

'Are you really better, dear Jack?' she asked anxiously.

'Yes, thank you. Quite cured. Good-bye;' and he was gone.

That her lover's leave-taking was a little abrupt did strike Maude; she was, however, far too confused by the turn affairs had taken to attach much importance to the first circumstance.

When she returned to her uncle, he seemed wonderfully better; and at supper he talked quite cheerfully of their future.

Maude passed another sleepless night. She did not so much mind the terrible loss she had sustained on her own account; but she was bitterly disappointed that she could not do all she had promised for her dear Jack. She determined, however, to be the most loving and economical wife possible. At all events, her uncle would not be able to accuse Jack of being mercenary now; and there was much comfort in that reflection. Perhaps, after all, they would be able to have a proper wedding, only of course it would have to be a very quiet one. How much nicer that would be, than running away and deceiving her uncle, who had always been so kind to her.

When she came down to breakfast the next morning, she was looking pale and a little worn, after her two sleepless nights. The major, however, seemed to have succeeded in throwing off his grief in quite a wonderful manner, and was in almost his usual spirits.

'Have you heard how Mr Browne is this morning?' Maude ventured to ask the landlady's daughter.

'Why, miss, he paid up for the week, and went off by the mail-train last night, declaring he was sure the place didn't suit him.'

Poor Maude! The blow did indeed fall on her with crushing force.

'Dear me, rather sudden! We shall miss the old gentleman—eh, Miss Maude?' said the major, as soon as the uncle and niece were left together. He laid a slight stress on the adjective, and there was a suspicion of fun in his eyes. It was, however, no laughing matter to Maude; she, poor girl, unable longer to act her part, burst into an uncontrollable fit of weeping.

'Poor child, poor child!' said the major compassionately. 'It's a sharp lesson for you to learn. But it is better to bear a little pain now, than to suffer for the remainder of your life, as would most probably have been your fate, if I had not paid that scoundrel out in his own coin.'

The threatened loss of fortune was all a fabrication, Major Henderson having gone no nearer to London than the top room in Honeysuckle Cottage.

The truth was, the major had discovered what was going on, when he came upon the lovers so unexpectedly. He then devised the scheme, which he afterwards carried out so successfully, in order to test the sincerity of Lieutenant Mapleson's attachment to Maude. Major Henderson had of course been obliged to take the landlady into his confidence, and she, fully entering into the spirit of the thing, had suggested the major's occupying the top room in her cottage, whence he could watch Mr Browne's movements. And so Major Henderson had merely walked to the station, portmanteau in hand, and returning,

had entered Honeysuckle Cottage by the back way.

Maude's grief and humiliation were so real when she heard these details, that her uncle, thinking she would not care to remain where her story was known, wisely suggested returning home the following day.

'We can give a garden-party, or something of that kind, in honour of your twenty-first birthday. It will be a few days after the event, but that won't matter. I would give a good deal to see that young fortune-hunter's face when he finds out how he has been duped. There's no fear of his tittle-tattling about it, though, for his own sake, so the story won't get all over the town.—I suppose, my dear,' added Major Henderson, rather anxiously, 'you'll never let him again find the way to your kind little heart with his honeyed words?'

Maude drew herself up to her full height. 'No, indeed, uncle, that I never will. To use his own words, I am quite cured.'

Before the year was out, another suitor asked for Maude's hand; and on this occasion the anxious pleader did not have any cause to complain of Major Henderson's obstinacy.

#### PIANOFORTE DISPLAY.

MANY players are quick to recognise that an ostentatious parade of their abilities will win applause which would be denied to their natural gifts unassisted by art. And for this reason the modern candidate for popular favour will exhaust himself in efforts to heighten the effect produced by the exercise of his executive and intellectual powers, by tricks and artifices which are totally unworthy of a true votary of art, and which only serve to substantiate his claims to an apish origin.

When a passage involving the utmost exercise of the mechanical ability is rendered with perfect ease and dignity and with unconscious mastery over existing difficulties, the audience is apt to be unimpressed, and to conclude that the composition is not of an exacting nature. An artist who truly respects himself and the profession will not stoop to solicit admiration. When the performer is content to degrade himself to the level of popular taste, the performance assumes the character of a mere exhibition of legerdemain. The affected stride; the deliberate and ostentatious adjustment of the performer's majestic person to the artistic throne, the impressive pause while the hands are poised over the keys like a hawk preparing to swoop on its prey; the alternate elevation and depression of the wrist—one of the most absolutely useless and ungraceful artifices in vogue—all these things are an offence to artistic taste, and degrading in their very essence to the man or woman who resorts to them; but, sad to say, they possess an undoubted weight with the public.

A *staccato* passage executed as if the keys were electrically charged; a *legato* strain played with the fingers prostrate on the notes, and the person of the performer sprawling inelegantly over the instrument—these and a score of other uncouth and needless contortions go to make up the sum of many instrumental performances.

Now, our conviction is that these artificialities one and all are absolutely and entirely unnecessary, and do not enhance the brilliancy or expressiveness of the performance by one iota.

Contortions are totally useless as a means toward increasing the digital dexterity of the performer, or enabling him to interpret with greater fidelity the composer's inner meaning; the most delicate gradations of light and shade, the subtlest distinctions of expression, may be attained by the quiet, masterly, and intelligent exercise of those flexible bones and muscles underlying the structure of the hand and wrist, and are entirely compatible with the maintenance of that dignified repose which should characterise the interpretation of the most exacting classic.

The velvety smoothness of the *legato*, stealing on the rapt senses as gently 'As tired eyelids upon tired eyes;' the different *staccati*, varying from the feathery touch, tripping like elfin footsteps on an enamelled sward, to the clear, incisive strokes, cleaving the air like the crystalline tintinnabulations of a woodpecker's fairy mallet; the strong, deep, passionate, singing tone, 'Yearning like a god in pain,' are all attainable by the same simple methods, and do not require the lavish display of power, the patent drain upon the player's faculties, which are now the inseparable adjuncts of a pianistic exhibition.

Nor are these meretricious arts confined to the superficial charlatans who throng the courts of music. Were this the case, a strong league of earnest-souled artists could be formed the better to crush out this crying evil, one of the surest indications of the growing artificiality of the age. But men and women of undoubted genius, whose mechanical ability and intellectual grasp are frankly conceded by their peers, and reverentially acknowledged by their inferiors, do not scorn to resort to artifices wholly out of keeping with their attainments and pursuits, and which only enable them at best to exercise an insecure and evanescent ascendancy over the minds of their hearers.

#### THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE.

A curious project is on foot to erect, in the rear of the National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, on ground belonging to the present prime minister, the Marquis of Salisbury, a vast Tower, four hundred and twenty feet high, and sixty feet square at the base. This prodigious erection is to be called the Victoria Jubilee Tower, as a grand memorial of Her Majesty's jubilee year. Its estimated cost will be about thirty thousand pounds, and it will have the credit and peculiarity of being the tallest erection in England. At present St Paul's Cathedral is the highest, measuring four hundred and four feet from the ground to the top of the cross; whilst Salisbury comes next, the altitude of the beautiful spire being just four hundred feet. The proposed Tower will contain a staircase; but for those who desire to be saved the climb of nearly five hundred steps, a lift will be provided in the centre of the building; and it is hoped that, as the Tower itself will be a great novelty, and the view from the summit both remarkable and striking, a large revenue will be derived from sightseers. Tall towers seem the fashion just now; and Paris proposes to erect one

to measure six hundred feet in height. Most people will be ready to admit that the object and motive for the building of the 'Victoria Jubilee Tower' is both just and high-minded.

#### D E L A Y.

Ripae ulterioris amore.

STREAM, that from yon mountain-crown,  
Bubbling forth through sand and sedge,  
Swollen and turbid, tumblest down  
Over boulder, slab, and ledge,  
Fain I to my lady go;  
Stay, fond flood, thy torrent flow.

No kind bridge, no mossy plank  
Guides me to the further side;  
No boat, hidden 'neath the bank,  
Mocks the foaming barrier tide;  
And no human strength could breast  
Such tumultuous unrest.

Three days syne, I might have crossed  
Ankle-dry thy rocky spine;  
All thy pools were flecked with frost,  
Slim thy runnels: three days syne,  
I had laughed at thaw or spate—  
Stream, I had not felt my Fate.

In a night my passion rose,  
Burst its panoply of ice,  
Gathering fury from the snows  
That had choked it in their vice:  
In a night hast thou, too, risen  
Vaster from thy frosty prison.

Passion's sudden birth, wild flood,  
Is an image of thine own;  
May the same similitude  
Stamp their course: o'er stock and stone,  
May Love's torrent onward roll,  
Barrier-spurning, to its goal.

Vain the prayer: already thou,  
Rioting without remorse,  
Strength, and more than strength enow,  
Hast to ban and bar my course;  
Love's impetuosity  
Meets and moans its match in thee.

Ah, roll on—roll out thy power—  
Roll: for yet a little while,  
And the kindly glittering hour  
Shall efface thee by its smile:  
Under suns that find thee drained,  
Still shall Love flow on unreined.

Here, upon the roaring brink,  
I shall linger on and mock,  
While thy beaten waters shrink,  
Eddying under stone and rock;  
Then shall Love arise and pass,  
Merrier for to-day's 'alas!'

L. J. G.

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